





The Indian Missionary Record

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JULY — AUGUST, 1938

Published Monthly

LEBRET, SASK.

Flower Day at Pasqua.

On Saturday, June 28, the Indians of the Reserve held their annual Flower Day. A High Mass was celebrated in the Church by R. F. Guy de Bretagne; while the school children from the Reserve and the band players were responsible for the singing. Fr. Kalmes delivered the sermon, speaking in English and Santeux. After the mass the Indians decorated the graves of their dead and the appearance of the churchyard was very impressive. A heavy rain fell during the day and this spoiled the usual picnic. The return to the school was difficult because of the roads.

The following Tuesday, the Piapot children accompanied by the band, journeyed to their Reserve where a similar ceremony took place. Mass was celebrated in the open air by R. F. Maurice de Bretagne and again Fr. Kalmes preached. After Mass, prayers were said in the cemetery, and here also we admired the feelings of the Indians toward their beloved departed.

With the careful organization of Messrs. Harry Ball, Abel Watetch and Peter Gopher, supported by the Indians of the Reserve, a full programme was enjoyed by all during the day. At noon, the Fathers and the Band Boys were tendered a banquet, after which Chief Nanipawis spoke a few words, to which Rev. Fr. Principal replied.

In the afternoon, the local ball team met the Pasqua team and after a long fight the latter were able to squeeze out an 8 to 7 decision in their favor. Later on, the School boys met the Piapot boys in a Softball game and were forced to admit defeat to the tune of 9 to 7.

Field Day at Abernethy.

Joined with the Fort Qu'Appelle School team, a few of the boys journeyed to the Inspectorate Field Day at Abernethy, on Friday, June 3rd. The results of the meet proved very good, as the boys took home one cup, an individual champion medal and a number of ribbons, thus helping Fort Qu'Appelle win the Aggregate prize. In the Relay race, the Juniors took first place. The members of the team were: A. Kayasawatam, Johnny Gopher, Robert Fourhorns and Mickey Yuzicapi. Johnny Gopher finished second in the 60 yard dash, and A. Kayasawatam took first and second in the 100 and 220 yard dashes respectively.

First Mass at the School.

Following his ordination to the Holy Priesthood on June 12, Fr. A. Lacelle celebrated his first Mass the following day in the chapel of the School. Assisted by his Parish Priest and with his two brothers acting as Altar Boys, Fr. Lacelle went through the emotional ceremony leaving a deep impression on all those present. Fr. Piche preached in French and English, describing the duties of the Priest and the wonderful change which had taken place in Fr. Lacelle through his ordination. At the Communion, twenty little boys and girls of the School received Communion for the first time from his hand.

Ordained at the same time as Fr. Lacelle were: Fathers St. Jacques, Jalbert and Roussel, who are also well known by former pupils of the School.

Fort Francis, Ont.

Treaty, June 2.

The Indians of the Cootchotching, Standjikoming and Northwest Bay Reserves gathered on the treaty grounds on the 2nd of June to receive their annual payments from the local Indian Agent, Mr. A. E. Spencer, assisted by M. E. Lyons, Indian Interpreter. The old custom of greeting the agent with shouts and shooting upon his arrival seems to have been dropped here owing perhaps to the fact that our local Indian agent does not come by boat any more.

The Indians, young and old, from far and near, were happy to receive their customary "shoniya", as they eagerly entered the Council Hall, filling it to capacity.

Two constables, Mr. MacTavish and Mr. Olliver, were on duty on the grounds.

Near the baseball park, the church wardens and the ladies of St. Martha had two stands where meals and sweets were served. We are glad to thank the women of the reserve for their appreciated contribution of home cooking.

A 1.00 p.m. the grounds were dotted with groups of Indians sitting down on the grass and having their noon meal. Father de Varennes, principal of the school, Father Fry, Brother Bernier and Robert Adams, president of the church, enjoyed their meals at the stand together.

Very few "old timers" were present. The presence of old Joe Natwens was remarked. He claims he is over 90, but still very active and looking forward to the next winter trapping season. Old Pater Jourdain, ex-chief, although he is crippled with rheumatism, did not miss coming to the treaty grounds. Being between 80 and 90, he is the oldest man of our band.

The chief, Hector Mainville, assisted by others, distributed to the Indians the usual gill fishing net twine.

In the afternoon our young men played a baseball game. All the Indians were sitting around and quietly watching them. The Juniors or Dipsy Doodles defeated the local ball team. After the game the church wardens treated the players to a case of pop. A game of soft ball took place after the baseball game. Another case of pop was supplied by the women for the soft ball players.

A few sisters of the school appeared on the grounds. Mr. Spencer, our Indian agent, treated them to a drink of pop.

Father de Varennes addressed a few words to the people saying how glad he was to see them enjoying themselves so well.

The proceeds of the day amounted to \$148.00, with a clear benefit of \$60.00 for the church fund.

—Tom Linklater.

Children of Mary.

Four new members were admitted in the Society of the Children of Mary on the 18th of May: Mary Bruyere, Alma Redsky, Beatrice Mainville and Helen Wilson. Following the ceremony of admission in the chapel a little concert was given in the church hall in honor of the Queen of May.

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ED. LAFLEUR, Associate Editor.

Cum permissu superiorum.

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Marieval, Sask.

Mission News.

Two weeks ago, good tidings brought joy to the hearts of the good people living near the Agency. Every second Sunday, the Missionary Priest goes to Mr. J. B. Sparvier to say Mass for the faithful, anxious to worship the true God. A surprise was given them when Father announced that a charitable soul from the East had made them a gift of \$500 for the construction of a chapel to be dedicated to St. Joseph. How grateful must we be for the paternal care God takes of our poor Indian missions.

Dunny Rabbit, the Little Girls' Pet.

We had a little rabbit which we tamed. The boys had caught it and gave it to the girls. It was given the name of Bunny and one girl was named to take care of it, but it remained everybody's pet. Bunny ate grass, bread, apples, chocolate and drank milk. We had much fun with Bunny, as he played around the room running away from his keeper. One day, Father told us to let Bunny play outside; but a little girl stepped on him and poor Bunny had to walk on three legs for a while. The next day he was found dead outside the girls' yard. All the girls felt lonely and sad to see dear little Bunny gone.

Grade III Girls.

PICNIC

On the 24th of May we had a softball game. Father had promised some chocolate to the winners. The boys and girls were mixed for the game. After a tough game, Father took the winners to the kitchen and gave each player three chocolate bars. After dinner we went to the farm for a picnic. Around 3 o'clock, a shower made us quit our games and we had to return to the school. But we still had our supper outside, on the front lawn.

On the King's Birthday, we were glad to stay in for a fine rain which gave renewed life to the young plants. The holiday was only put off.

In May we had the honor of greeting in our midst the Most Reverend Father Provincial, whose wise and paternal counsels are always appreciated.

In a few short weeks, every one will be glad to bid farewell to those friendly books and return home for a good vacation.

o

St. Philip's

Local News.

The Indians of Cote and Keesekoosé Reserves received their Treaty money on Wednesday, June 15. The annual Indian Sports will be held on the following day, the school children will be in attendance. Several Jumping Deers have been

seen on the reserves these days, they are liable to take part in the Treaty celebrations.

School News.

Father Bousquet left for his mission of Valley River Reserve on May 27 and remained for two Sundays. The prizes for best conduct in the month of May were awarded to Wilfrid Brass, Christina Musqua, Russell Southwind and Alice Tourangeau.

We recently had the pleasure of a very friendly visit from the Schoolmaster of the Cote Day School, Mr. Dobbin. Mrs. Dobbin with son and daughter accompanied him.

SCHOOL NARRATIVES

May Closing.

Our May Closing was beautiful, although we had not, as in past years, a reception of Children of Mary. We left the school in procession, singing the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the boys following the cross and candle bearers, and then the Children of Mary following our three officers who wore their long sashes and carried the blue Banner. All the other schoolgirls came after them.

After the usual May Devotions, Father Paradis spoke to us of our need of Mary if we wish to be good and pleasing to her Divine Son. Father bade us think of what we are about to promise in our Act of Consecration to Mary, Mother most pure. This Act was read by Robert James Queweanzé and its responses given by all the school children. This is the fifth year we thus consecrated ourselves to Mary. Hymns in English and in Indian completed the consecration.

After Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, we returned in procession to school singing "O Mother Blest". We were very happy and were pleased when given a short recess to close that last lovely May evening.

Margaret Solomon,
President of C. of M.

IN MEMORY OF A SCHOOLMATE

On May 27, Alfred Tourangeau, a former schoolboy, died in his eighteenth year after much suffering, patiently borne. He had the happiness of receiving Holy Communion twice within the last week of his life and also received Extreme Unction.

Many Indians attended his funeral, Sunday afternoon, and the schoolboys, including his brothers, were pall-bearers. On Monday, we sang a Requiem Mass. We tried to sing well and we were glad to see the church all draped in black for Fred who had so often helped to put it up for others. We wished to do all we could because Fred had always been a good schoolboy and a faithful, generous worker. We shall continue to pray for his soul.

Robert James Queweanzé.
Grade VI.

FIRST COMMUNION

Trinity Sunday was a bright, happy day for us all as twelve of our little schoolmates received First Holy Communion.

Reverend Father Bousquet had prepared them in many ways after having taught them their catechism in Indian all year.

Low Mass was celebrated by our Rev. Father Principal in our school chapel and we all received Holy Communion after these happy little ones and we sang the hymns they could understand well. After Mass, the First Communicants, five boys and seven girls, received beads and pictures from the two Fathers and then found in the refectory a pretty table set for them and we all rejoiced with them. They were pleased to assist at High Mass at church in their First Communion attire, but

still more awaited them. — after the pleasure of visiting with their parents in the parlor, they were again so attired and came to the chapel to be enrolled in the three scapulars by Father Bousquet who told us of the protection given those who faithfully wear the scapular medal. We again sang hymns and shared in the joy of these little ones. One more pleasure was theirs when Father Paradis took their picture. I am very glad that my little brother was one of the happy twelve.

Edna Quewezance,
C. of M.

File Hills Reserve

At the Indian Hospital, Fort Qu'Appelle, the death of Joseph McKay occurred Sunday, June 12. Mr. McKay had been sick for some time and he died a peaceful death, after having received the consolation of the last rites of the Church. Mr. McKay was a returned soldier, having seen action at the front.

INDIAN 107 YEARS OF AGE

Mrs. John Asham, believed to be Saskatchewan's oldest Indian, will celebrate her 107th birthday anniversary within a few days. The old lady, at her home on Pasqua reserve, is still hale and hearty, and in pretty good state of health, says Dr. Symes, who visits the Indians regularly. He saw her two weeks ago.

This remarkable woman lives alone in her house, but has one of the best neighbors on the reserve, Robert Obe, who with his wife and children visits her every day. They bring her rations to her, also a few dainties in the way of pies and cakes, of which she is not too fond, for she says these new fangled things introduced by the white people, are not conducive to good health. She does her own baking and cooking and can still fry a steak.

Some of the people near Pasqua reserve have doubted the number of years which the lady has lived, but, they say, there is no one to dispute her statement successfully.

Mrs. Asham counts from the day of the treaty in 1874, and she says she ought to know. Carefully she has preserved in her memory incidents of her early childhood, and will tell you that her father and mother taught her to count by the number of moons, and by her count, in which there is no skipping of years, she is 107 years old.

For many years as a young girl she wandered over the prairie with her tribe, and covered the territory from the foothills of the Rockies to the early settlements on the Red and Assiniboine rivers. She has recollections of several massacres.

BIG INDIAN IS PRIZE WINNER

WOOD MOUNTAIN, May 27.—The Wood Mountain annual sports day sponsored by the Wood Mountain Baseball club, consisted of baseball games, ladies' softball and foot races.

The first prize in baseball was won by Rockglen, with Flintoft coming second and Woodrow third. The games were well played and each team competed favorably with the other. The ladies' softball was won by La Fleche with Flintoft second.

The Indian one-mile race was won by Albert Hawk, with George Ferguson, a 200-pound full-blooded Sioux coming second and Walter LeCaine third.

The day's sports were climaxed with a barn dance.

Fort Alexander, Man.

Father C. Ruest who has been at the School for the past two years has been called by the Rev. Fr. Provincial to go and take the place of Father Poulet at Camperville. The boys and girls of this school will always remember Fr. Ruest who has given us much of his time, teaching us Catechism, organizing our games and many other things.

Patrice Bruyere, the schoemaker of the School, has been called back to God to receive the reward of his life, after long and painful sufferings. He had the consolation of receiving the last Sacraments during his illness and of receiving Communion only a few hours before his death.

A former pupil of this School is dangerously ill, and we pray God to give her back her health. She is Margery Courchene.

A Trip to Pine Falls.

As a reward for obtaining 85 per cent. or more for their work and conduct, ten girls went with Fr. Principal to visit the Paper Mill at Pine Falls. There we saw how the paper for our newspaper, our books, etc., is made. The large rollers, grinding pulp wood as matches were producing so much heat that we had to take our sweaters off. We could not hear ourselves because of the noise. We had to go up a spiral staircase and some of us had to be helped up because we were frightened. There we saw a big hammer weighing more than two tons, pounding on some iron bars. We surely appreciated this trip to Pine Falls, and will try again to have good marks so that we may enjoy the surprise for next month.

T.B. VACCINATION SAVES INDIAN BABIES

LONDON, Ont., June 10. — Dr. A. F. Simes, of Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask., told the annual convention of the Canadian Tuberculosis association 3.2 percent of the Indians in his territory had active tuberculosis.

The rate was 25 times as great as among white people and the general death rate of 23.54 per 1,000 was four times as great as the general death rate among whites. Vaccination of babies had produced encouraging results, he said.

LATEST NEWS FROM LEBRET

Procession Day.

Sunday, June 19, the Corpus Christi Procession took place in Lebret. After a High Mass celebrated in the Church, the Catholics of the Parish, with numerous visitors from all parts, accompanied the Blessed Sacrament along the streets of the Village. The Indian School Band led the way, and all the children from the School took part. The throngs that followed the procession showed the faith and good will of the Catholic population.

In the afternoon, a modified baseball tournament was held at the Indian School grounds. Four teams took part in the day's game. One representing Piapot, Pasqua and Muscopetung, the Sioux, File Hills and the School. First to clash, were the West Reserves and the School teams; this game resulted in a 6-4 win for the School. The Sioux defeated File Hills, and in the final, the School team won over the Sioux, by a 5 to 4 margin. The breaks in the 6th inning was enough to spell victory for the boys.

Indian Religion

Let us summarize all we have said on this subject. The Indians had primitively received the divine Revelation made to the first man. But of this treasure, a good part was lost and replaced by false money; multitude of divinities, superstition, magic; and we have explained how the Great Prayer fell into an unavoidable decay as low as the Great Medicine. The Indians had the obscure feeling of that decay. The Religion of those primitive children of the Prairies could not satisfy their heart and their mind. But they had no authority to supervise that evolution, to point out the wrong, to keep pure the deposit of the true belief, to refuse the superstitious or magic practices. History tells us that there is only one true religion, which under the jealous care of God kept away the bad and the false. But the Indian Religion was a "human" religion and no man had the power of preventing the corrosive effect of time. The Indians found but one way to protect themselves: they declared sacred and true and good all that was old. Like the Reformists witnessing the deterioration of Christianity into innumerable sects and creeds, they decided to believe and do as much as possible as the "primitives" who were closer to the first revelation and so were supposed to have a purer notion of God and of Religion. But the Indians had no history, no libraries, no written records, no learned men who could distinguish the false from the true, and decide among the practices those which were worthy of God. Their only way was to take and keep at once all that was told by their ancestors, good and bad together. Even though they had been keen critics, there is the striking example of modern Protestantism. In spite of the good will of many, their leaders jump from the frying pan into the fire, from an unavoidable scattering of sect into a deliquescent, creedless, codeless modernism. Where there is no supernatural and unique "authority", there is no religion which is able to stand the course of ages.

The poor Indians never made great efforts to acquire material wealth. Their real riches were their dear old traditions, sacred to them, to which they clung as to life itself. But that could give them but a paganism, full of gross mistakes, often immoral, without mercy for the old, the weak, the children—remember that 300 years ago it was common for them to abandon in winter their helpless sick—and that they used to feast on their prisoners and exchange wives. The Christian influence changed a great part of the old paganism. The Indians were an old race which contacted much with youthfulness and hopefulness of the European, very impressed by their silence and seriousness. They were incredulous as many people. Their humor was oriental and sardonic, an ungleeful irony; they used laughter not to exult with, but to cut. It was laughter, the laughter of public opinion, that they most feared as the cruel sanction of their traditions. They were joyless, grave, stoic, patient and old. They had waited so long that they seemed to expect nothing more. They were the symbol of pagan patience, of the noblest of pagan patience, by which a few primitive pagans still believed after all in a high goal and waited for him to give them they knew not what. They had become paralyzed spiritually, in an impassivity from which they could not be awakened to joy, save by a help which only their High God could give, which only their High God could conceive, and which from no one but their High God they would receive.

Now that painful method of accepting as holy all that was ancient had the defect of making holy

all that has the holiest of antiquity. That uncompromising conservation had for motto: "What was oldest was the best." Hence there was but one way of doing anything; it was the way it had been done.

It was a real bondage and the Indians resented it keenly, though with patience they kept on the tradition. With their religion, fear not love was the outstanding element of a dramatic life. Their impossible and joyous wait for liberty was secured by "artificial heavens". Long fasting, smoking the native tobacco and the sweat bath weakened their bodies and favored their dreams which for them was a direct contact with the spirits. How, three centuries ago, the Indians were brave warriors, proud and courageous, bearing the most awful sufferings without a word. The readiness with which they turned to fire-water was so significant, so dire in its consequences that it cannot be explained by reasons that leave out of account the deep and religious cause, the eagerness of evading a sad and hopeless life ruled by enslaving traditions. It was not the greediness of destitute hunters but the craving for liberty and oblivion which makes them so defenseless before the temptation of alcohol. Today it is but a sheer vice.

The Indian Religion is nearly gone. A few still cling to some superstitions. Our young people attend pagan dances like white people attend a circus. The good Catholic Indian at last realized the age long dream of his ancestors in the true religion which is a treasure of joy with a clear and reasonable creed, a clean moral code which guides toward perfection, a beautiful Liturgy, numerous sacraments and helps visibly God's work in the soul. Such Catholic should pity and help the respectable old pagans who yet seek for the Light. Above all they should rebuke and, at the same time, help the poor "modern pagans" who through their bad conduct have lost their faith and try to excuse their fall by pretending that they go back to the Indian Religion. This one is gone. Those apostates are now too civilized to have faith in a few remnants, childish and superstitious practices, in which no one can find any more an Indian Religion.

Fr. Guy de Bretagne.

Kinebikons

Chapter V.

Towards the middle of June, Teweigan wanted to take part in a pagan ceremony. That night she sat quietly in her room, her window half opened, and smoked her pipe. She heard a noise and rushed to the window to listen. She understood. The evening breeze through the trees carried the sound of the tam tams on the Reserve.

She ran to the Sister and said: "Come and hear, Sister; the Indians on the Reserve are going to celebrate the dance of the Great Medicine, the dance of the year. I want to go, but I want Lucy to come with me. She has not given herself to the Manitou and if she does not do so, she will die soon."

"What is this dance?" the Sister asked. Teweigan stood there in silence, wondering whether she should tell her pagan secret.

After a moment's hesitation, she said: "I have offered myself seven times in my life to the Manitou at the Great Medicine Dance. I have gone through the seven degrees of the Great Medicine. I obtained the powers that go with each degree and I still have the insignia that go for each of them. Do you see this "Ishion", that drum, these claws and bones which hang to my neck? Those are the marks of the seventh degree by which I

was made a "sorcerer", "great Sorcerer" of the Band of Standjicaming. I want to speak to our Manitou, the "Turtle". I also have the power of interpreting dreams. Do you see this medicine bag? I used to have in it plants which could give or take away life. I picked them on my last trip through the forest when I was received in the seventh degree of the great medicine.

Do you see my grey hair? I have attained the age of the crow of Red Got. And why? Because I received the first degree of Medicine, while still young. I would like to see Lucy live as long as I. That is why I would like to see Lucy come with me to the dance. There will be there many persons who will offer themselves to the Manitou for the first time, others the second, the third or the fourth.

Lucy has not yet offered herself to the Manitou. If she does not do so soon, she will not live long. Sister, please let her come with me.

No, replied the Sister. Lucy has given herself forever to Jesus. She cannot break a promise. Lucy hates your Manitous; she does not want your heaven, where, as you say, the birds are always singing, and the Indians eat and play all the time. Teweigan, Lucy will not go with you.

Oh! Sister, please listen to an old lady, asking a favor for her grand-daughter. Yesterday morning, Pitawikijik, the great sorcerer of Standjicaming, came expressly to Couchiching to tell me the time of this dance, and leaving he begged me to take Lucy with me. He added: "That young girl has never offered herself to the Manitou; she will not live long if she does not make that sacrifice."

All the Indians say that those who do not enter the great medicine during their life, offering themselves at least once to the Manitou, will not live long and will not enter the Indian heaven.

Teweigan, must you be so foolish as to believe all those superstitions? When will the Indians cease to be lead as blind people by the sorcerers? Open your eyes, Teweigan, look around you and do not be so credulous. Where are the numerous Indians of Standjicaming today? Fifty years ago you were 400 and today you are hardly 100. And all those people belonged to the Great Medicine. They had often given themselves up to the Manitou? Why do they not live today? Many would be still young. And where are all those Indians who lived around Rainy Lake and the Lake of the Woods? At the end of the last century, they were four thousand. Why have they nearly all disappeared? Had they not given themselves up to the Manitou? Did they not belong to the Great Medicine? And those little wooden huts which you erect on their graves, which we see here and there, what has happened to them? Were they not supposed to cover your dead and protect them against the bad weather? They have fallen away and their dust mingled with the dust of the dead has blown all over.

And those gifts, sacrifices of all descriptions which you place near the graves, near the little door in the hut, what has become of them? They have rotted, were broken or stolen by the passing. You believe that your dead need sugar, tea, meat, clothing and other things to get to the heaven of the Indians. You say that the road that leads to your heaven is long, often difficult; you say that the dead need to renew their strength, and that is why you place all these objects near their graves. What foolishness, Teweigan. Listen to this story that was told to me by an old lady from Mariapolis. She lived near the Reserve of Indian Springs, where the Indians adore the Manitou as you do.

Her occupation obliged her to pass near these tombs. Around them one could see decorations made of good cloth. There were also many of the

articles which you place there. Seeing all these things going to waste, she thought: Why let so much go to waste? I have at home many girls who need dresses. We can also use the tea and sugar. And she gathered everything that was there and used it at home.

And your medicine men make you believe that whoever touched those gifts would be punished immediately. What foolishness. How simple the Indians are. That old lady is still living today. At eighty she can still knit.

How your sorcerers fool you, Teweigan, and keep you in the most disgraceful ignorance. Look at the white people living around you. They do not dance to offer themselves to their Manitou, and yet they live long, and are increasing so rapidly that they are invading all your lands. See how the Catholic Reserve of Couchiching is prosperous. Twenty years ago, there were two hundred people there. Today there are three hundred and fifty in the village. Some old people have passed eighty. They have never done the dance of the Great Medicine. They live long and have many children.

And you, followers of the sorcerers, your population decreases. If some metis had not come to mix with you during the last few years, your Reserve would be empty. When will the pagans become more reasonable?

After this speech by the Sister, Teweigan forgot all she had said about the dance, and head down, she went to sit in the corner of her room, smoking and thinking. But she did not sulk, being more shameful than mad.

(To Be Continued)

M. Kalmes, O.M.I.

Contacting the Pagans

(Continued)

In the tent there were a dozen of the oldest Indians of the Reserve sitting in a circle around the chief, who, being blind, had not noticed my intrusion. He was an old man, over eighty, a tall, stately and most imposing figure. His head was thrown back and two braids of white hair framed his inspiring face. He was the personification of the mystical Indian tribe. On a former occasion he had told me the cause of his blindness. "When I was a young man," he said, "I surpassed all the others of my tribe in intelligence and in skill at hunting. Many times attempts were made to take my life, through jealousy, but the Great Spirit protected me, and all they could do was pierce my eyes, and they succeeded as you can very well see."

Immediately in front of the sorcerer were two enormous pipes, placed in a perpendicular position about two feet apart. Between these pipes I perceived a pile of bright colored pieces of silk and cotton. There were also many articles of bead work. These, no doubt, were the offerings of the faithful to the Great Spirit. As I looked at these things the sorcerer and his two assistants each seized a hollow tomahawk containing a certain number of small stones, which they shook briskly with a rotary movement, accompanied by vibrations and slight jerks of the body, while unintelligible cabalistic formulas were sung. When this part of the ceremony was ended, the sorcerer, in his loudest voice, began imploring the Great Spirit to lend him his words, that he might announce to his children and grand children what he himself had learned from his grandfather. He humiliated himself, saying that he was honest, wise, good, in

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firmation and their marriage was blessed.

Other adults also received were Charles Wilson Shingus, John Buffalo and Mrs. J. B. Ledoux, bringing to five the conversions of adults. Meanwhile I performed four other marriages and baptized four children. This was indeed a wonderful result, miracles wrought by the grace of God in the hearts of those good Indians.

Fr. C.-E. Comeau, O.M.I.

CONTACTING THE PAGANS

short about perfect. Note the difference between Christian humility and pagan pride. Next the old man took a more solemn tone, while he denounced the white race, who came over the seas, invading the country of the Indians to steal their furs and the meat of their animals of the forest and the plains. Then he led himself to sentiments of thanksgiving towards the Great Spirit for having given him many children and grandchildren. After this he began praising his religion.

When he had finished there was a moment of silence. Then I solemnly stood up before the assembly and began to speak: "If you will permit me I shall explain the reason of my presence among you. I have just assisted at one of your ceremonies, and have listened to your spiritual chief talking to you about your religion. Well then, I too, since I talk your native language, will speak to you of my religion. Then I began speaking about the creation of man, of his fall and its consequences, of the promise of a Redeemer: the birth, public life and death of our Lord. Afterwards I pointed out to them the necessity, even for the Indians, of belonging to this religion which He came to establish, and about which I had just preached to them.

As I was speaking I noticed that the old sorcerer had a longing to interrupt me. "Man of prayer", said he suddenly in a thundering voice, "you have no right to come here and talk thus to my children, teaching them your religion." He was visibly angry. After a pause he said: "You have no right to stay here on my Reserve. You must give me five dollars at once or you will be set upon by my people." I resolved to be brave as the Indians admire courage, and I decided to show them that the Man of Prayer is not afraid of the sorcerer, and is even ready to defy a band of Red Skins for an opportunity to announce the Christian Religion. I said to the sorcerer: "What! I have taken the trouble to learn your language, because I like you and wished to be able to converse with you, visit you and even stay among you; and now you want to chase me away. I have spent many days and part of my nights bent over my books to learn your idiom, and you want to make me pay for the privilege of talking it! You complain that the white people invaded your country, but would you have left your country and all those of your tribe, to preach religion in a strange land? "No, I would not have done it," he resolutely answered. "Well, I have done it, to teach you the only way which leads to heaven, and I would voluntarily let myself be killed for the sake of my religion."

Suddenly the sorcerer seized an object which, in the gloom of the night, appeared to be an axe. Recalling the incident of the priest, who, a few years before, had been beaten and driven from this very Reserve, and with fear in my heart, but pretending to be brave, I remained seated. This seems to appease the sorcerer who, provided with a pipe, probably with the pipe of peace, thought I, extends it toward the four cardinal points, then straight up towards the heaven, and having drawn a few clouds of smoke, passed it among the assembly. He seemed considerably appeased, but kept silence. At that moment an inspiration came

to me. I had in my possession a few cigarettes of which the Indians are very fond. I will offer one, thought I. If he accepts, it will mean that peace is re-established between us. He took it from my hand with a half smile and I gave some to his assistants who smoked with great enjoyment.

"Well then! great father," said I to my reconciled enemy, "you have white hair, you must know a lot of interesting stories. Relate to us the great deeds of Nenaboush (a fabulous Indian hero with queer and fantastic morals). This visibly pleased him, and throwing his head slightly backwards he began. When he had talked a long while, I expressed a desire to see what was going on at the dance. "I permit you to go," he answered without form of reconciliation. I thanked him and went out.

The night was calm and cool. Some branches of aspen, recently cut, had been struck into the ground in the form of a large circle, in the midst of which was lighted an immense fire. Bright red rays scintillated through the rustling leaves in the glade producing a fairy-like effect. Softly I traced my way towards the entrance that I might see what was going on inside. Hardly had I arrived when the chief stopping everything, invited me to enter and escorted me to a place prepared for my coming. No sooner was I seated than another appeared bearing an enormous dish filled with duck legs and broth. It would not do, of course, to refuse what was offered me so heartily, so I helped myself and ate all I could though the food was not appetizing. During the time the plates, filled with duck meat, were being passed around from group to group, four young men entertained with their songs accompanied by the beating of the drums.

When all the appetites were satisfied the whole assembly was formed into groups and each, in turn, danced around the big fire; the groups of old squaws, the young men, then the old ones. The young ones, especially the little boys, danced with animation, and they looked funny with their faces smeared with rouge. I noticed that the little girls did not dance but do not know the reason. The old squaws only had the right to sing, alternating with those who were beating the drums. I must here observe that there was nothing indecent about the dance, on the contrary they perform it as a religious rite.

When all are tired out, they sit in a circle while one of the oldest Indians stands near the fire, relates something of the past and gives good advice to all the young members of the tribe. Then the dance is resumed with renewed vigor until everyone is completely exhausted with fatigue.

I stayed till late in the night, quite satisfied and contented to have been so well received at that meeting which was entirely pagan, assuring, in some way, the prestige of the Man of Prayer, and establishing his contact with the pagan souls of this Reserve. Before leaving to take a short rest, I addressed them briefly, thanking them and expressing my happiness at being there. I passed the few remaining hours of the night curled up on the seat of my buggy where I slept soundly.

Before taking my departure a squaw brought me her child who had lost his sight. I touched his eyes, praying the Divine Healer to restore at some time his sight, and cure the blindness of these poor pagans so that they may see and learn the luminous truths of the Christian religion.

I left Kinistino with great hopes for the future, determined to return soon to see whether the good seed I had scattered had germinated with the dew of divine grace and the help of your good prayers.

—The End—

Fr. F. Poulin, O.M.I.